

NEWS RELEASE

Eric Melgren, U.S. Attorney

Contact: Kena Rice

(316) 269-6481

Headquarters 1200 Epic Center 301 N. Main Wichita, Kansas 67202 (316)269-6481 FAX (316)269-6484 **Topeka Office** 444 Quincy Topeka, Kansas 66683

Kansas City Office 500 State Avenue Suite 360 Kansas City, Kansas 66101

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ELEVEN CHARGED IN \$2,000,000 SCHEME TO STEAL INSULIN AND INSULIN TEST STRIPS FROM ARMY POST PHARMACIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

WICHITA, Kan. — United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that eleven individuals were charged today by a federal grand jury in Wichita, Kansas, with **one count of conspiracy to transport stolen goods in interstate commerce; one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud; and one count of forfeiture of \$2,334,000 in United States currency plus real estate located in Virginia, the proceeds from this conspiracy.**

Melgren said that the indictment charges:

- **Ronald A. Ausberry,** 27, Petersburg, Virginia, United States Army, pharmacy technician, formerly stationed at Ft. Riley, Kansas, currently stationed at Ft. Lee, Virginia;
- Sabrina Ausberry, 22, wife of Ronald Ausberry, Petersburg, Virginia,
- **Antoine D. Brown**, 25, Illesheim, Germany, United States Army, pharmacy technician, formerly stationed at Fort Polk, Louisiana;
- **Stefan M. Carty**, 33, Wheaton, Maryland, United States Army, pharmacy technician, stationed at Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, D.C.;
- **John W. Cooper**, 28, Elizabethtown, Kentucky; United States Army, pharmacy technician, stationed at Ft. Knox, Kentucky;
- **Donna L. Cooper**, age unknown, wife of John Cooper, Elizabethtown, Kentucky,
- **Michael M. Harper**, 29, Augusta, Georgia, United States Army, pharmacy technician, Fort Gordon, Georgia;
- Eric A. Hernandez, 21, Fort Riley, Kansas, United States Army, pharmacy technician, Ft. Riley, Kansas;
- **Hazra Kishun**, 27, Manhattan, Kansas, United States Army, pharmacy technician, Ft. Riley, Kansas;

- Wakan G. Stamm, 28, Leesville, Louisiana, United States Army, pharmacy technician, Ft. Polk, Louisiana;
- and **Max H. Thomas**, 22, Fort Riley, Kansas, United States Army, pharmacy technician, Ft. Riley, Kansas.

The indictment alleges that from 2002 through February 2004, Ronald Ausberry, Brown, Carty, John Cooper, Harper, Hernandez, Kishun, Stamm, and Thomas were all pharmacy technicians on active duty in the United States Army assigned to post pharmacies at Ft. Riley, Kansas, Fort Polk, Louisiana, Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, D.C., Ft. Knox, Kentucky, Ft. Lee, Virginia, and Fort Gordon, Georgia.

The indictment further alleges that in 2002, Ausberry, while stationed at Ft. Riley, Kansas, recruited the other pharmacy technicians to participate in this scheme. The indictment alleges that they conspired together to steal insulin and insulin test strips from Army post pharmacies and mailed the stolen items to co-conspirators in Florida and Arizona. The indictment alleges that they were paid approximately \$2,334,000 for the stolen insulin and insulin test strips.

The indictment further alleges that Donna Cooper, wife of John Cooper, packaged and mailed insulin and insulin test strips stolen by her husband to a co-conspirator. The indictment alleges that Sabrina Ausberry, wife of Ronald Ausberry, allowed a co-conspirator to deposit money from the sale of the stolen insulin and insulin test strips into her personal bank account and used the money for her and her husband's personal benefit.

If convicted, each face a maximum of five years in federal prison, without parole, on each count. Initial appearances are set for Monday, July 12, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. before U.S. Magistrate Judge Donald W. Bostwick in U.S. District Court in Wichita, Kansas. No one is currently in custody.

"This was a significant scheme to defraud Army pharmacies across the country," Melgren said. "These medical supplies were intended for the benefit of Army personnel and their dependents. The diversion of these supplies, as alleged in the indictment, for the personal benefit of a few pharmacy technicians, deprived our men and women in uniform of materials intended for their benefit. I commend the excellent work of the United States Army, Criminal Investigation Division, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the Food and Drug Administration, Office of Criminal Investigations, in this investigation."

The case was investigated by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Food and Drug Administration, Office of Criminal Investigations, and the United States Army, Criminal Investigation Division, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Alan Metzger. As in any criminal case, a person is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The charges filed merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.